A U M

What is it to you . . . whether another is guilty or guiltless? Come, friend, atone for your own offense.

—Mahavagga, *K. 2, C. 27.*

THEOSOPHY

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"THE FRIENDLY PHILOSOPHER"

THE publication of the life-record of Robert Crosbie will be found, as time goes on, to mark a distinct stage in the progress of the Theosophical Movement of our century—that is, the cycle from 1875 to 1975, a period of three adult generations.

The Friendly Philosopher is very much more than a book, one among many, as Theosophy is very much more than a philosophy, one among many systems of thought. Robert Crosbie belonged to the first generation of Theosophists. He was but one of many, many thousands of men and women attracted to inquiry, affiliation, effort, in the Parent theosophical society. Most of those so attracted soon dropped out of the Movement, their curiosity satisfied. Of the modest percentage which remained more or less identified with the Movement in its genetic stage, the most part soon became content, either to follow up some particular line of Karmic heredity re-aroused in this life, or to fall into the passivity of satisfied faith.

With the passing of H. P. Blavatsky in 1891, the Movement entered its second distinct phase. The Teacher was gone beyond the range of human communication; there remained the Teaching placed of record by her, but the *Antaskarana,* the "Link" between the world of Masters and the body of Theosophists was broken. Broken—unless within the membership there were student-Theosophists who had meantime become genuine accepted *Chelas,* Disciples whose fidelity and understanding had been tried and tested and proved to the satisfaction of the Masters Themselves.

H. P. B. had written late in 1886, in her article, "The Theosophical Mahatmas", that out of the general body of Theosophists sev-

eral hundred had become "lay-Chelas"—that is, Fellows of the society who had adopted *in full* the otherwise nominal Three Objects of the Movement, and were consciously striving to become fitted for acceptance as "probationary *Chelas*". Out of these hundreds, she wrote, seventy-two only had been accepted as worthy of trial under the rules and discipline provided by the Lodge of Masters for the self-guidance, the self-instruction, the self-protection of the Candidates during "the ordeal of Chelaship"—a period, so she affirmed, whose *minimum* duration is seven years. Of the seventy-two, she declared, *three* only had not hitherto failed; and of the three, only *one* had triumphed over all trials and become an *accepted Chela.*

Had Theosophists weighed, as they were amply able to do, the circumstances under which "The Theosophical Mahatmas" was written; had they measured the tremendous implications of her statements as indicated—the Parent society would have continued unbroken, the subsequent disasters would have been avoided, and the Theosophical Movement never have "been thrown into disarray," as has been the case ever since the death of H. P. B. The *seeds* of disruption were present from the beginning; they had been present for a million years—ever since the separation of the Fifth Great Race from its Atlantean parent. But the tares of the race, its *Skandhas,* had not choked out the wheat till the commencement of Kali-Yuga, now over five thousand years ago.

The Karma of humanity is what the Masters of Wisdom have to face in dealing with the Theosophists; the Karma of humanity is what the aspirant to *Chelaship* has to encounter and conquer in himself if he is to be *accepted* by the Lodge of Masters as of Their company. How many Theosophists feel strong enough, are in earnest enough, actually and unremittingly to face the evil Karma of this single personal existence? How many go beyond the merely personal view of Karma to shoulder the burden of family, of national, of racial Karma even as precipitated in one generation—and shoulder it as their own proper debt and burden of responsibility toward all mankind, toward all Nature? How many are there whose understanding is such, whose sense of "universal brotherhood" is such, that they joyously accept as their own the Karma of all the past and all the future generations of our mankind?

To become an *accepted* Chela is to have envisioned all this, to have "taken the vow of service to 'the endless end' ", *to have made that vow good* against the onslaughts of the whole evil Karma of

mankind. This is what every Probationer has to do before he can "stand in the presence of the Master".

All this was repeated over and over again, by H. P. B. as the direct Messenger from the Great Lodge, and by the Masters Themselves in special Messages to various Theosophists. In the light of these solemn and most weighty asseverations, he is a blind or foolish and heedless Theosophist today, who cannot see for himself the tinsel, the sham, the effrontery and the blasphemy of the scores upon scores who have announced themselves to the credulous and uninformed as "successors" to H. P. B., as Adepts, Initiates and what not. If, in the bright eleven years of the first stage of the Movement, one only actually succeeded in the "fulfilment of the Law" where hundreds might have done so, we have a measure of the problem confronting that one after the departure of H. P. B. If Masters Themselves, the lifetime work of H. P. B. among the students, the teachings she made accessible to them all—if these bore so little *ripe* fruit, what would happen to the whole exoteric side of the Movement when, under Law, it had to be left to itself with what had been provided from the esoteric side, plus such ripe and unripe fruit as existed?

It is to be observed that H. P. B. did not *name* the one successful nor the two who "had not hitherto failed". If the best of the Fellows could not discern for themselves whom she had in mind, to have named names would have been to have set up an "esoteric authority" in the same sense that Colonel Olcott, the "President-Founder", was the exoteric authority. There were plenty ready to accept H. P. B. as an esoteric authority, few to see in her a Teacher and so to study and apply what she taught.

Two years later, in 1888, H. P. B. formally certified in the name of the Masters that W. Q. Judge was then "a Chela of thirteen years' standing" and that, as such, "full faith and confidence" were to be given him among those then striving in the "Esoteric Section" to fit themselves for their probation. Every member of the "Esoteric Section" knew that Judge possessed H. P. B.'s and Masters' own "full faith and confidence"; that she accepted full responsibility for his acts as for her own. Every Fellow of the Society knew from her public statement in her first Message to the American Convention that she regarded Judge as her *alter-Ego*. When H. P. B. left this scene her recorded last words to the London "Inner Group" were: "Keep the Link unbroken; do not let my last incarnation be a failure." To whom and to what did she refer?

Whom else could she have meant than Judge? What else could she have meant than that Judge, as an *accepted Chela,* was the only one in the "Esoteric Section" on whom the members could rely as she had relied, and as they had hitherto relied on her? What H. P. B. had to say about Judge cannot be ignored or evaded today, any more than it could then, without its corresponding consequences. If what has been said about Judge, in many quarters and by many theosophical leaders from 1894 to the present hour—if what has been asserted and believed is true, then there is no dodging the fact that H. P. B. is the real culprit; that she herself was not and is not to be trusted except with such mental and moral reservations as each one chooses to make for himself. There is no escaping the fact that H. P. B. endorsed Judge *without reserve;* no escaping the fact that the Masters endorsed H. P. B. *without reserve;* no avoiding the fact that Judge and H. P. B. are unique in these respects, if in no other. To any man who can add one and one together, there can be but one sum-total: the Masters of Wisdom are responsible for H. P. B., her Mission and her Message; H. P. B. is responsible for Judge, his mission and his message. In both cases the responsibility was publicly, freely, and repeatedly assumed—assumed by Masters in Messages to those who *doubted* H. P. B.; assumed by H. P. B. in messages to those who doubted Judge.

In its exoteric aspect the Theosophical Movement "rests its case" on the philosophical and moral worth of the Wisdom-Religion, the Theosophy recorded by H. P. B. Anyone can test the value of Theosophy for himself, once he has been brought into contact with it. He *must* do that if he is to be anything but a believer or a sceptic on hearsay. On its esoteric side, the Theosophical Movement rests its case on the self-induced and self-devised efforts, *checked by their Karma,* of those who may aspire to be or to become *accepted Chelas.* As the Movement *began* from the esoteric side, so its unbroken continuity depends on those, be they few or many, who work to "keep the Link unbroken" between the world of men and the world of Masters. How is that work to be carried on?

For this, there are the precept and example on both the esoteric and the exoteric sides of the Movement during all the years since 1875—precept and example both from those who succeeded and those who failed. "But", objects the hear-say or the sectarian, "how is one to judge?"

How is one to judge Theosophy itself? He can do so "on in-

formation and belief", or on his own ability to study, compare, and weigh the teachings of the Wisdom-Religion with any or all other systems known to him. Theosophy was presented strictly and solely on its own merits, not as anyone's relevation or theory. How could those merits be known at second-hand?

If accepted and adopted because of its ascertained value, then Theosophy becomes a known and actual standard by which to determine the relative merits or demerits of any and all things. If it is not an all-inclusive, all-sufficient criterion, then at once it becomes no better, if no worse, than the thousand-and-one dogmatic and theoretical standards of appraisal followed by men in general.

All Theosophists alike profess to regard original Theosophy as an impartation from the Masters of Wisdom. The Masters profess to regard it as an *infallible* criterion of right judgment and right conduct. They apply it first and foremost to Themselves, and thence to all men and all things. They became what They are by that path and no other. H. P. B. regarded the Masters and the Wisdom-Religion as infallible, and conducted herself accordingly. If she is to be judged by us—and judged she must be—by what standard shall her conduct be measured?

From the moment he first met her in this life, Judge appears as one who had *no* doubts as to her *bona fides,* her Mission, her Message, her unique place in the Movement—and conducted himself accordingly. In all he wrote and did there cannot be found jot or tittle to the contrary. Now that the life-record is closed of all those active in the first generation of the Movement, it is the easiest imaginable theosophical task to compare the theosophical career of Judge with any or all of the others. How many did that in their hour of choice, *i. e.,* of probation? How many of those who came into the Movement during the second generation, now drawing towards its close, took the trouble to make an intelligent and informed comparison between Theosophy and other systems? Between H. P. B. and Judge on the one hand, and all the others publicly active, so as to be able to discern for themselves who was true to the line and who not?

The generations overlap, or there could be no continuity either in right or wrong direction. Judge died in 1896, but Theosophists who, along with him, had been active during the first generation, survived him for many years and gave the Movement direction—Mrs. Besant, Mr. Sinnett, Colonel Olcott on one side, Madame Tingley and her lieutenants on the other. How is one to judge which wing of the parent society pursued the straight and narrow

path, or whether, perchance, both alike failed to "keep the link unbroken"? Is judgment to be made on the basis of the respective claims and promises of these several guides? Nothing is easier than to take any (or all) of them at his own word—*and see if he kept it.* They all professed entire loyalty to Masters, full faith and confidence in H. P. B., promised the most strict devotion to Theosophy and the Three Objects of the Theosophical Movement. If they were true to their own professions and promises, why the prevailing sectarianism, confusion of tongues, the bewilderment of ignorance, the multitude of conflicting and contradictory dogmas and practices—all alike claimed to be Theosophy and Theosophical?

The Friendly Philosopher, now made easily accessible to all Theosophists, shows that before the death of the Founders, Robert Crosbie, from the moment of his first contact had *no* doubt of Theosophy, *no* doubt of Masters, *no* doubt of H. P. B., *no* doubt of Judge—and that he acted accordingly. Mr. Crosbie departed earthly life in 1919, fifteen years ago. He thus survived Judge by twenty-three years, nearly to the mid-point of the centenary cycle of the Movement, and so passed through all the phases of the Movement from the period of the incipiency of the "Esoteric Section" in 1887, to 1908, twenty-one years in all, when he undertook to undo what had been done by the then numerous "occultists" who controlled the destinies of the scores of societies and groups into which the public side of the Movement had degenerated.

On the 17th of November, 1908, Mr. Crosbie sent out to as many Theosophists as could be reached, a circular letter entitled "To every open-minded Theosophist". Three months thereafter, on February 18, 1909, he inaugurated *The United Lodge of Theosophists,* whose DECLARATION had been drawn up by him. Copies of the Declaration were sent to all those who had received the preliminary memorandum addressed "to every open-minded Theosophist", and to as many more old and new Theosophists as could be located. Associated with Mr. Crosbie were seven students who had come in contact with him under Karma, as all contacts good or bad come about.

The rest is history—made and in the making. Mr. Crosbie's share in that history is abundantly disclosed in *The Friendly Philosopher.* No one can read this book even casually and fail to see that here was a man devoid of self-assertion, whose whole life and being were swallowed up in single-hearted devotion to a Teaching and to Teachers of whom he had *no doubt.* That at no time and in no way did he do other than point to the Source whence had come

his own faith, his own surety, his own self-consecration. Having gained a *Theosophical education* of his own his one aim and object was to put that education in service to his fellow-Theosophists of no matter what opinion or affiliation. While he lived, the United Lodge of Theosophists was devoted to the cultivation of solidarity among its Associates, and to fitting them to do by others as had been done by them. It was Mr. Crosbie's never-dormant heart-felt longing to restore coherent unity among Theosophists "wherever and however situated". All his labors were to that great end, and the Declaration of U. L. T. was drawn up for no exclusive group or association, but for a common-ground on which all sincere Theosophists might meet.

Mr. Crosbie has been "gone" for over fifteen years. The original seven have become more than that many thousands of Associates. The indirect effects of his work have been a restraining influence as well as a restorative one throughout the whole area of the Theosophical Movement. *The Friendly Philosopher* is the friend of *all* Theosophists. May they come to share his faith, his devotion, his consecration.

To All Theosophists

"The Theosophical Movement" was published in book form in 1925. Since that time great changes have taken place in the theosophical world. The first generation of Theosophists has passed away, the second is passing, the third is coming actively upon the field of battle. Beginning next month, therefore, this Magazine will publish a survey of theosophical history as made since 1925, with such citations as will, it is hoped, make clear the issues of the present and the near future. Readers of this Magazine are requested to call the attention of as many as possible to this Series, which will continue throughout the current volume.

—Editors, Theosophy.

CONCERNING BONDAGE

NOW and then among humans one meets those whose existence seems literally to have no purpose, human or divine. So inconsiderable are they that, live with them as long and intimately as you please, no flavor of distinction, no essence of individuality, no trace of original thought, no effort of will other than that arising from nutritional requirements, will ever be experienced. To them, it would seem, must be vouchsafed at least one priceless spiritual boon—freedom from the gnawing tooth of pride. But no! Utterly without value in all human relations as a man may come to be, there still remains some out-jut of personality upon which a tattered rag of vanity can be hung; step upon that rag, and the fire will fly indeed, even though the point of pride consists but in the possession of the crookedest nose in the neighborhood.

Even more recondite are the refuges of the personal selves of the strong and thoughtful; in them, pride and vanity take such devious roads to escape Egoic scrutiny that often their presence is revealed only by the mortal pain given by some hurt which bears no apparent proportion to the event. We may go on the path of self-discipline many a year without ever treading on the tail of some most important vanity; yet that slight reluctance to peer down certain avenues of the soul should have warned us! Pride retreats ever within; taking one emplacement after another, we yet fail to seize upon the ever-moving defender thereof.

Pitifully tenuous become the demon's handholds upon life, as the end nears; yet with ever-increasing pertinacity. Earnest Theosophists have been known to sacrifice place, fortune, good repute, in bearing the sacred banner against the ranks of prejudice; yet at the end boggled at that which the vanity of the child would disdain.

Many who speak on Theosophy, and speak well, have never uncovered the inwardness of that in them which balks at speaking unless some slight recognition of personal prowess is given by the announcement of a name—or even of a qualification. Many write in fiery words indeed; but they cannot write at all unless the mark of identity remains upon their work, if only in pseudonym!

Others, writing anonymously and contentedly for years, experience a measurable difficulty in merging their words indistinguishably with those of others in a common expression; though their individual work was hitherto unsigned, it was known to *them*: and

a secret power of self within had been clinging to that slender salvation with disconcerting vigor.

Yet the time must come, if we are to tread the Path to the very end, that all our work of worth and importance will be known to but few; and they are not given over-much to flattery. And beyond that, again, a long, long series of incarnations in which the most heroic deeds shall be performed, the destiny of the world perhaps turned again and again by dint of terrible spiritual stress and sacrifice—and *these* deeds be known to still fewer, not given to flattery at all.

How, then, shall we arrive at this if we fail to take the lesser hurdles as they present themselves, and foolishly keep our delicate sensitiveness wrapped in cotton-wool?

There is a saving secret about this, a secret hanging upon the eternal balance of Nature. It is that Man himself being a knot in Eternity and Infinity, his forces are always in equilibrium; he cannot suffer in one section of his nature without reaping joy in another. What is the very bitterness of death to the lower self is the breaking of prison bars to the Greater Self, one more step on the way Home. In reality these ramparts which we tend so carefully, bearing arms always against even our nearest and dearest lest they steal away some of the substance of that precious *self,* are the most terrible restrictions and restraints to true Self-hood. Have we not sometimes guessed as much from the faint, far note that sounds through our soul from out of time and space as resignation is reached after bitter loss? Can we not imagine what others have learned beyond peradventure, that the inner sacrifice of the bonds of self, in pride or possessions, loosens the long-prisoned Real within us, to flow freely, joyously, untrammeled, along the lines of its own cosmic Will-Force, in that Self-action which is the essence of all bliss? Can we not see that to the Real the things of self, the very attempt to conceive of Self as *self,* is the only root-pain in the world, the very essence and generator of all those sufferings which men seek to escape by fleeing more deeply and darkly into the lower dungeons of their natures, their personal souls possessed by horror of that ultimate Liberty which *they* conceive as annihilation?

THEOSOPHY AND THE SOCIAL SYSTEM

THE real feelings of the people, and especially of the "submerged tenth"—now in reality more the "submerged half"—find public expression but seldom. Newspaper proprietors and their advertisers, for the most part, belong to those classes which are not submerged; the more radical and violent publications do not as yet—furnish channels any more congenial to the real masses than the former. It is only by living and moving sympathetically among the inarticulate cohorts that one can with any certainty learn the direction of real popular feeling.

Those who have been able to do this find that their present experience checks with the "sociographic mathematics" of the past fifty years of the American industrial system. The joint conclusion is that while the American people are not yet "through" with the "system" called capitalism, they have definitely, for the first time in history, put it upon trial. They no longer have the old faith in it.

Each oscillation of business has been more violent than the last; each has left deeper scars on the souls of working men and women; each has added to the numbers of the permanently dispossessed, the permanently disaffected. And conversely, each has added to the magnitudes and numbers of the great fortunes—resulting from the efforts of clever men who have each time seen the clouds breaking a little ahead of the fear-damped perceptions of their fellows.

Such a course of things, if left unchecked, can have but one outcome—the ultimate overthrow of the whole system. It has failed this time to come to that issue for the reason that in 1932 a Presidential election was at hand with its convenient scapegoat for the sacrifice. The magnitude of the changes which were forthwith attempted, some upon popular demand, all with general acquiescence, betokens the manner in which the old economic faith had collapsed under the surface during the preceding three years of trial. That this will to change was not a mere passing hysteria is shown by the fact that the *Literary Digest* poll of this year showed an actual gain in the popularity of the "New Deal." Moreover, the *Digest* polls reach preponderantly the upper middle class. What must one suspect of the feeling in less fortunate strata? The well-to-do can only guess them from the sporadic explosions of strikes, riots, and the almost equally explosive effects of certain elections.

It can thus be said with almost certainty, that unless the next

cyclic oscillation is subdued, its crisis will see upheavals beside which the comparatively mild reformism of the "New Deal," horrifying as it is to the older conservatives, will be as a summer zephyr beside the monsoon. Can, then, that oscillation be damped? Certain phases of the "New Deal," particularly its control of the stock market, against which a most determined, powerful, and widespread opposition was launched, represent a conscious and deliberate attempt at subduing these cycles; likewise the farm measures. Such cycles, however, being not "social" or "economic," but fundamentally aspects of human nature—how far can they be subdued?

Earnest Theosophists who have become aware of, and sought control of, the cyclic aspects of their own human natures, will not be unduly optimistic as to the possibilities of control of mass human nature devoid of self-knowledge, by other persons, and through legislation. Human nature writhing with the internal energy of its own cyclic forces, will squirm eel-like out of all imposed bonds, and though forced into somewhat changed channels, will exert its explosive forces nevertheless.

In the nature of things, honest business as well as dishonest—and by 1929 an appalling amount of American business had ceased to be honest—had to enter the reformatory strait-jacket. Thus honest business as well as dishonest is now (August of 1934) demanding counter-reform, partly as the result of abuses of the new measures, partly from chafing under the new rigidities. The same men who, in 1933, petitioned the President that they could not live unless such measures were instituted, now petition him that they cannot live under them. Elements which in 1932 were loudly accusing Mr. Hoover of being King Log, now regard more intensely, Mr. Roosevelt as King Stork. Their numbers are not great, but their money and publicity implements speak loudly, incorporating in their plaint enough of real grievance and injustice to make the story bite. When to them are added the multitudinous voices of dreamers disappointed of Elysium, it is quite probable that the resulting pressure will break down all the barriers, precisely as happened to the governmental restrictions of World War days. The nation then by reaction plunged into an era of unmitigated piracy in high places and of unmitigated sensuality in low places, leading inevitably to the catastrophic events of 1929.

In case of such a reaction, certain dangerous fragments of the "New Deal" will in all probability be preserved and enhanced;

conducing to the intensification of monopoly—in fact, that tendency is already evident. Add to this the fact that when a restraint is finally broken, the reaction is proportionate to its duration and intensity, and one may imagine the result of adding these factors to the increasing violence of the natural cycle. And next time there may not be a President in position to be annihilated at the critical moment. The elements are therefore all present for a repetition of 1922-29 on a much grander and more violent scale. There are two preventive possibilities; first, that sufficient proportion of a permanent reformatory spirit will survive to really "damp" the cycle; second, that the numbing poison of destitution and misery has struck so deep that the energy is no longer there by which the system can pick itself up and run to another crash. As to whether either of these or both will rule, is too early to say; but will not long be so.

Meantime, should the fatal upheaval ultimately come, what will be its nature?

It would be unwise to draw too close an American analogy with current events in Europe. While it is true that there are common psychic currents—the wave of emotion which swept Hitler into power was essentially the same event that attended Roosevelt's elevation, though with other coloration—yet the nations are at very different parts of their cycles. Likewise there has been a radical separation and precipitation of racial karmas since the roots of the present world-events were implanted fifteen hundred years ago.

Certain points, however, are clear. First, that in a modern armed State, revolution by violence is impossible until popular misery has reached such spread and intensity that the armed forces themselves mutiny. Second, that in a State which preserves and respects universal suffrage, resentment can find no hereditary or permanent ruling class against which to crystallize; the "rulers" of necessity change with the tides of feeling. Third, by the peaceful exercise of suffrage, changes in the social and economic order as drastic as any which occur under the "dictatorship of the proletariat" can happen. Fourth, the classes dispossessed by such changes will fight for what they conceive to be their rights, attempting to overthrow the legally constituted government if necessary. This is the so-called "fascist" form of revolt which has occurred in Italy, Germany, and Austria.

In America we see events following those of Europe in a mollified shadow form, with propaganda and money playing the part of arms and ammunition. The great danger that reformatory forces face, and of which none of them seem aware, is that by going too

fast and trying too much, such powerful and destructive opposition is aroused that the last state of the people is worse than the first. The subjugation of reactionary interests in Germany and Austria might have been accomplished peacefully and permanently over a greater term of years. As it was, the brief dawn of hope has flickered out into the all-engulfing social night that now threatens even the outposts of Europe, and casts its penumbra forebodingly upon the New World. The new reforms in America, between errors incorporated in themselves, popular impatience, and the now rapid rally of forces in opposition, hang precariously in the balance.

More important to the Theosophist than the mechanical aspects of revolution or reform, are the deep-seated causes underlying the situation, created by the present people of the world in common fifteen hundred years ago, and which now tend to repeat themselves. At that time the Roman world was breaking down into a series of small states, tribes, cities, city states, and independent villages. There was an enormous variation in the quality and type of government; in some, intelligence and beneficence ruled; in others, the rule was simply the archetype of the gangster rule growing in large American cities, and which in those days developed the great monarchies.

Of karmic necessity this type arises among degenerate and indifferent citizens in a degenerating civilization. Hence, the plague of petty tyrants which is rising to curse, not only Europe, but the backward sections of the United States, is but history repeating itself. On the other hand, even in the worst days of the Fall, there were thousands of well-disposed but helpless citizens; there were patriots who struggled in vain against the tide of degeneracy; there were philosophers who carried the flickering spark of spiritual wisdom, and maintained it through the oncoming darkness, even against the lethal breath of Holy Church. Of these men there were enough left when the Western Empire fell, to re-stablish civilization on the Bosphorus—the Eastern Empire which had yet a thousand years of culture, of art, of knowledge and comparative justice to live, and without whose influence Europe might never have risen again from abject savagery.

Karmic law must and does provide deserved fields of action for all these men; and thus, while in some sections of the globe, the millions reap the bitter fruit of past delinquencies, in other sections their wiser compatriots and contemporaries, born to new opportunities, create rising cycles; thus do the right and left branches of

the human path diverge. To know the future of the social systems means to trace, *from the basis of moral causation,* the pathways of human Egos from times of old.

Yet even in the darkest of lands there is hope; for the road of social darkness is the road of pain that makes men search their souls; *and when the lesson is learned the necessity ceases.* The individual may "come out from among them" and create for himself a fair future in better surroundings, in the very midst of the blackest night that ever emanated from human folly, ignorance, and selfishness. The question for the individual is not whether he is fortunate or unfortunate in being in this, that, or the other social system; the question is whether, having ears he heareth, having eyes seeth, and having a mind, uses it or merely panders with it to his passions and fears.

THE PURE HEART

Physical life is not necessarily a vale of sorrow. The time must come when we have made man's life on earth what it ought to be, when we will have no fear of anything, when we will not be afraid of our fellowmen. It was said of Daniel, that when he entered the lion's den, the beasts of prey did not touch him at all. Why? Because his heart was pure. He had no harm in it for anyone. He trusted to the spiritual law of his own being, and all nature makes obeisance to that. We could go out calmly, courageously, happily, relying on the law of our own natures. If we did so, we would bring our daily lives in line with that nature, for there is nothing of our action which does not come from the mind, and back of the mind is the *motive* we have in acting. *Motive* is what makes our actions really "good" or "bad." If we are righteous in ourselves and desiring to do right, then all that we do will flow rightly from us and every function will be a righteous function. All action springs from and is colored by the motive held in performing it.

—*R. C.*

BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS

WHEN one is convinced of a fact he will think and act upon the basis of that conviction. Sometimes, however, our convictions are disturbed or become insecure due to the pressure of external influences. Two of the doctrines that receive the greatest consideration in Theosophy are Karma and Reincarnation. With the abundance of evidence in their favor and the positive necessity for their existence in the scheme of things, we might confidently expect to find them resident as convictions in the minds of all Theosophists.

Because as doctrines Karma and Reincarnation correspond to facts in the existence of the Reincarnating Ego, these doctrines are readily accepted. But such acceptance does not necessarily imply conviction, since it rests upon evidence, testimony and plausibility. Conviction must come through demonstration. Both Karma and Reincarnation can be demonstrated within the experience of each individual to a much greater extent than is commonly realized. They can be demonstrated, not through "memory of past lives" nor through observation of effects of causes set in motion to prove a theory, but as present facts—as scientific bases for thought and action.

We are all observers, all having various points of view through which we see others and are seen by them. The great obstacle facing the Theosophist is his neighbor's viewpoint—which is also his own. One may *believe* that Karma and Reincarnation are facts. He hears about them in Lodge meetings, reads about them in theosophical literature and discusses them with his theosophical friends. Then he goes out into a world that knows nothing of these doctrines and which lives upon an entirely opposed basis. In his business and social relations, in the struggle for existence, he finds men and women thinking and acting as though they expect to live only one life on earth, profiting to the fullest extent from the sensations, experiences and rewards of a material existence; avoiding, or trying to avoid, undesired consequences. True, the Theosophist knows that one life on earth is an impossibility and that every action contains its consequent reaction. But unless his conviction is strong indeed, he cannot withstand the pressure of the examples of his fellow-men and quite frequently thinks and acts from their point of view rather than his own.

Once one has gained a knowledge of the facts of Theosophy, he

can never again be as he was before. He may attempt to put aside his knowledge and act as other men, or it may be crowded aside by a world indifferent to these truths, but always his responsibility is greater than theirs; always when he thinks and acts as they do there is something within him that remembers, something that says, "I know better."

Unhappy is the experience of the student who, seeing himself different from others because of his acquired knowledge, either tries to live apart from his fellows or tries to conform to their ways in spite of what he knows. It hardly seems logical to suppose that any sane man could entertain conflicting opinions for any long time. His opinions may change as his knowledge increases, but as his knowledge increases his opinions tend to crystallize. This is true of the Theosophist as of other men, because in addition to the evidence of his senses, he has awakened a monitor within himself who *knows,* and who, if heeded, can transform opinion into conviction.

"How long halt ye between two opinions? If God be God, follow him, and if Baal, follow him." Now, what has all this to do with Karma and Reincarnation? Just this—either the truth must prevail or the "way of the world" must prevail. If we have formed an opinion as to the reasonableness of these doctrines, that opinion must become a conviction before it can be used practically for the benefit of others. If we are convinced of these truths, we should be able to demonstrate them, to ourselves at first, and then to others. Was it not thus, according to the teachings, that all Great Teachers obtained the knowledge for the passing on of which we stand indebted? And how can we discharge the obligation except by taking and using the teachings for the benefit of all?

DESIRE CONSTRUCTIVELY USED

The lower principle (*kama*) is called bad because by comparison with the higher it is so, but still it is the basis of action. We cannot rise unless self first asserts itself in the desire to do better . . . Theosophy does not teach that the passions are to be pandered to or satiated, for a more pernicious doctrine was never taught, but the injunction is to make use of the activity given by the fourth principle so as to ever rise and not to fall under the dominion of the dark quality that ends with annihilation, after having begun in selfishness and indifference.—*W. Q. J.*

THE CIVILIZATION OF TOMORROW?

DR. MILLIKAN'S "Cosmic Rays," Abbé Le Maitre's new-old theory of the rebirth of solar systems out of the cosmic dust of disintegrated predecessors, the very recent experiments of Prof. P. A. M. Dirac at Cambridge, England, not to mention the numerous corroboratory and collateral results achieved by other scientists—what do they all portend?

In the same larger sense, what is the significance of Christian Science, Unity, New Thought, Humanism, Bahaism, The Oxford Group Movement, the great number of mystical, psychological, and Occult bodies, large and small, whose rise is coincident with the decline of interest and influence in the various "orthodox" churches—Catholic, Greek, Protestant?

Both these vast seismic disturbances in what has hitherto been regarded as the "solid ground" beneath the superstructure we call science and religion, are concurrent with the political, economic, and social upheavals now everywhere in evidence. Humanity, as a progressive or retrogressive entity is very clearly in the throes, either of death or of a new birth.

The life of every man, and of all mankind, is housed in the structure of thought and conduct which collectively we designate as civilization. Any given civilization is certainly born of its predecessors as surely as "man is born of woman." The new is generated in, rather than by, the old. Each new civilization, like each new generation, involves a third element, quite distinct from the visible factors at work. We are accustomed to think of the birth of a human infant as due to two parents, and do not take into our calculations the *tertium quid,* the reincarnating Ego itself, to whom the parents serve, not as its "creators," but as mere ways and means for entrance into the arena of human life.

Thus, despite all revelations of religion, all theories of psycho-physical science, as despite the character and environment of the parents, Egos are continually being born which give the lie direct to the prognostications of both. "Princes of the earth" indeed, are born of the lowliest of fathers and mothers, whose ancestry, heredity, education, and circumstances in life, all alike would have indicated an opposite character than is actually manifested in their offspring. And equally, from the best of parents and ancestral lines as from the best of circumstances, come ever and anon monsters of iniquity and mediocre or imbecile descendants. And, as if further

to bewilder or arouse the minds of men, these two extremes of "human nature" are often to be found in the same family.

Applying the same factors of accumulated experience, of transmitted experiments and reasoning, of results recorded by those who have preceded the present generation by unknown and immeasurable millenia, and the analogies between the individual man and the family, the nation, the race at large, between any given sample of humanity, and humanity itself—become so clear, so uniform, so overwhelming as to be self-evident to the observer pure and simple, the only man who can be justly called a Student in the philosophical and scientific sense. There are few families indeed which retain to maturity, let alone through life, either the antenatal symbiosis of mother-to-be and the unborn child; few in which the ties of physical consanguinity and intimacy, of common necessity and interest, are strong enough to preserve harmony and coherence as a social group. As parents and children grow older, latent and hitherto unsuspected tendencies develop, tangential and centrifugal forces, cross-purposes, frictions, distintegration and death as a "family" in any true sense, become the rule and not the exception. Each member "goes his own way," forms not merely new but alien and all too often hostile ties and interests. The "family" is dead, and new families have replaced it. It is easy to see that although this is the lamentable truth, it has no need of being. Like the banyan tree of fact and fiction, each new shoot or scion, granting a common ancestor, should but strengthen the accord, enlarge the sphere of common interest, make of the ever-growing family a more and more united and coherent entity which becomes the tribe, the nation, the race. This would be Universal Brotherhood as a realization, not an utopian dream—and strange to say, this realization is actually the ideal, the mainspring of effort and conduct hidden in each individual of the family, the tribe, the nation, the race. But as life is lived, singly and collectively, not only is the noble possibility not realized, but its visible fruitage is the exact opposite of what all alike strive ceaselessly to achieve.

The water on a revolving grindstone is a well-nigh perfect physical analogy of that "Wheel of Change" of which the Buddha spoke as a metaphysical reality; which Burne Jones put on canvas in the Victorian era as "the Wheel of Life," and which is, perhaps, put most vividly and inclusively in the last chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita:*

> "There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjuna, the Master—*Ishwara*—who by his magic power causeth

> all things and creatures to revolve mounted upon the universal wheel of time. Take sanctuary with him alone, O son of Bharata, with all thy soul; by his grace thou shalt obtain supreme happiness, the eternal place."

What is, or what might be, the true significance of these symbols, and many others like them, in every religion and system of thought worthy of the name? Whatever they may be intended to characterize or to prophesy, they must, if the great Teachers are entitled to the name, be equally true of visible as of invisible Nature; of the life and life-experiences of each man, each being, in all that "vast assemblage" we call Nature. Men in our generation, as in preceding ones, have been far more addicted to the form than the formula, to the formula and prescription, than to the sick soul housed in that form, the sick man for whom all the formulas and prescriptions are intended. The physician of the soul and the physician of the body alike, have their attention and their efforts concentrated on the ills and not on the patient—while the patients themselves are so ignorant, so miserable in their various diseases of body and mind, that few of them can be induced to listen to any doctrine but "escapism." So long as the attitude of mind of the mass is as it is, its influence can but govern and determine the attitude of its Doctors—of Theology, of Law, of Science, of Philosophy, of Economics, of Medicine in all its branches. Few and rare are either doctors or patients to be found who are more interested in cause than "cure," who know that true diagnosis must precede both prescription and prognosis. Thus, the patient either gets well or dies, or goes on suffering from old ailments as well as new—and all the time both doctor and patient know in the depths of their own hearts that all alike are *law-breakers,* who desire to go on living and acting lawlessly, irresponsibly, and yet reap the results of responsible and orderly living in obedience to what are, in sober fact, sufficiently well-known "laws of health" in no matter what department of human life. In short, the universal disease is that men desire to conduct themselves as if this were a universe of miracles and chance, not of cause and effect.

"Yes, but this is only human nature," the universal reply is, "and human nature can't be changed; it is the same now as it was a million years ago."

Is it? Can't it? As a generalization, the affirmations are sadly applicable, but 'tis well to remember that "the *exception* proves the rule." Every advance ever made by the race in any direction—

and the race *does* advance, albeit by slow and painful cycles in the turning of the wheel of life, of time, of change—every such advance has been due to *exceptional* individual men, who have so far triumphed over their "human nature" as to act from another basis than that common to the great moiling, milling mass of their fellows. From the humblest soldier fighting for the *common* welfare, not his own advance or advancement, to the greatest characters in the Hall of Destiny, one and all have dared to make the greatest and noblest of all adventures—"to live to benefit *mankind,*" not themselves. And, alas, under the the same great Law, every retrogression, every recrudescence of atavism in the race, has its genesis, its evil genius, in the individual who is the flower and embodiment of perfected selfishness.

Whenever we choose to survey the facts of our own experience and observation, we cannot doubt that "human nature" is neither *all* selfish nor all unselfish, but an ever-fluctuating mixture of the two. That a man may choose either, whether as an ideal to be striven for, or by passive acceptance of human nature as he finds it, in himself and in others, needs no argument. What does call for perception and reflection is that the man in whom altruism has triumphed over self-concern, or in whom undiluted selfishness has conquered every tendency to consideration for others' welfare—that *neither of the two is any longer a human being;* is as distinct from mankind at large as that mankind is distinct from the animal kingdom. Man occupies a form that is also common to the animal kingdom, but the gulf between the two is *impassable from either side.* Just so, as to the wholly good or the wholly evil man: they have the same appearance as other men, but their basis of conduct is no longer "human nature"—it is Divine or Infernal nature, *between which two natures there is nothing whatever in common.* The one seeks to emancipate humanity; the other to enslave it completely.

There *have been* civilizations whose teachers, leaders, guides, were Masters of Wisdom and their Disciples; and there have been other eras in which the civilizations, built by the former, have been entered, taken over, ruled and ruined by the Brothers of the Shadow and their Disciples in the Black Art of deceiving others to their ruin. What makes the difference, and what makes the possibility of this dreadful substitution? "Human nature," which desires to receive the benefits of both, without incurring the responsibilities of either. We want a universe of Law *and* miracle, both

to our convenience. We desire to *separate* cause *from* effect, so that we may reap where we have not sown, may avoid the reaping of what we have sown, responsibility or irresponsibility as our *desires* may choose.

Just as the third factor, the reincarnating Ego itself, is ignored in what we call birth into the family, so is the same factor ignored in the birth or death hour of a civilization. It is not the structure existing to-day, not the men and women now active on the stage of human life, which will determine destiny alone and unaided, for the World's Tomorrow. At best and at worst they can and do, by their attitude and conduct toward all the great problems of human life, open the door of birth to Beings who will embody, not the good *and* evil of the race, its "human nature," but personified fully intelligent altruism or personified fully intelligent selfishness.

Which shall it be, the civilization of tomorrow? It rests with the Masters of Wisdom, with Their true Disciples, with sincere and genuine students of and workers for the Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge, with every true-hearted man and woman wherever and however situated—and not at all with the religions, the politics, the science and economics of the day or any of their exponents or followers, high or low.

Work Where You Find Yourself

Whether you are in America, Europe, or India makes no difference. This is seeking conditions. I have come to understand that Masters themselves must have worked themselves up out of much worse conditions than we are in. No matter where we are, the same spirit pervades all and is accessible. What need, then, to change places? We do not change ourselves by moving the body to another *locus*. We only put it under a different influence. And in order to change we must have got to dislike the place we moved from. That is *attachment by opposites,* and that will produce detriment, as does all that disturbs the equilibrium of the soul.

—*W. Q. J.*

THE TREND OF THOUGHT

"ADAPT your thoughts to your plastic potency", was the advice of H. P. Blavatsky to one of her students who had asked her for instruction in "practical Occultism". The brief phrase embodies the first and most important of all steps in the psychology of self-introspection.

The mind is the real carrier of consciousness, and must be the one and only form or vehicle that endures, without beginning or end—immortal in the only sense that immortality can be rationally conceived of. The real principle of immortality for any being can only be that form which is capable of being endlessly self-reproduced, self-limited, self-enlarged, and the word Mind best expresses these three characteristics.

Karma, or the second Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine,* presupposes a self-existent Life which is the Source of all forms of whatever nature—for Being is essentially Life in a form of some kind. In the discussion, many places continued, *The Secret Doctrine* stresses the prime error of all popular and theological religions as the effort to *define* the nature of the One Life. All such attempts can only result in the mental or moral *isolation* of the Being from any possibility of realization of his own identity. The conception of self is inherent in all men—constitutes the Man; and if his conception of self is a false one, as is the case with the humanity we know and of which we are a portion, then the man both sensibly and insensibly uses his own mind to wall himself off from his fellows, from nature, from the SELF of all.

Having created this illusion of isolation for himself the being is necessarily incomplete in himself, for he has denied the flow of Life from without within, and from within without, and is as a consequence in endless war with the rest of nature and within himself. He can only maintain his isolated sense of self by violence or parasitism. He can only participate in Life by devouring forms: his food, therefore, is that of "the black doves of death, the birds of birth, decay, and sorrow". Among men as we know them, and in the kingdoms of nature as we contact them, we realize only a living death, and in the end realize only our own failure. There is no knowledge in failure; there is only the lack of it.

Everywhere one hears the question, innate in men: "What becomes of one after he dies?" The real question should be: *"What does one become after he dies?"* For, during our mundane exist-

ence, where every creature is in conflict of one kind or another with all others, we *cannot* "live for ourselves alone", despite our incessant efforts. The conflicting forces of the creative power directed by each, constantly interrupt with their forays our self-*assumed* separateness, as our invasions interrupt their would-be isolation. Thus the Life-power that in each is self-creative and self-preservative becomes self-destructive to all others, as theirs toward us. There could be but one outcome to such a struggle—mutual self-destruction.

The existence of all organic forms, as contacted by us, shows that in every case the Life embodied therein—the Being—is *out of place,* that is, out of his own proper place in nature. Strange that so few observe this fact, which stares us in the face in whatever direction we look; which is incessantly in evidence within each man's own being. Whatever else may be included in the conception of immortality, it is self-evident that it implicitly requires poise, balance, equilibrium that *nothing* can disturb or alter. All forms of Life as known to us are plainly either above or below their natural status, and therefore are necessarily compelled either to struggle to maintain their artificial mode of existence—or lose it, by rising or falling to their native level. The only nature we know is nature imprisoned.

Nevertheless, before our eyes, metaphysically, if not physically, are forms of being and levels of life that, so far as we have any experience of them, are immortal. They are non-existent to us because at rest, until we impinge upon their area, when they become instantly and effectively active—that is, alive in our sense of the term. What are the so-called "forces of nature", the "chemical elements", and, above all, "ideas", but such forms and such levels? And, finally and supernally important, what is that which each one calls his "self", but such a form and such a level?

When a man turns his mind inward to a consideration of what may be the real nature of self, he finds that which is "simple, uncompounded; unrestrained and free," save as it attaches itself to this or that state, condition, or form by the threads of memory, imagination, desire, thought and will—threads spun by himself.

Is it possible for a man to learn how to use his outer and his inner senses in such a way that they become his servants, not his masters? Not through any religion nor through any science as known by us or taught by us. But assuredly by following the leading light of those who have found their way before us through the crystal maze of mortal and post-mortem existence.

SCIENCE AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE

"Cartesianism"

OWING to elaborate mental constrictions inculcated in the mind by orthodox scientific training, a trend of thought once set in motion in the scientific world has all the undeviable solidity of the stream of water from a high-pressure nozzle, which cannot be cut with a sword or bent with a sledge-hammer. For that reason there seemed for years to be no infringement made upon the all-inclusive convention of respectable materialism, which took its greatest and most malignant growth in the warped brain of Haeckel, and still holds in thrall many a second-rate mind. During these weary years the accumulated impingement of facts upon the materialistic stream, so far from seemingly diverting it in the least, merely wore out the hearts and souls of the devotees of the Ancient Wisdom, who, with irresistible weapons in their hands, yet found themselves confronted by infrangible armor—the only known armor of that quality—prejudice in the human mind. Yet the falling of raindrops wears down the granite mountain; and the ramparts of pseudo-science are crumbling fast. In a few years we may expect to see the exponent of "blind force" and the "fortuitous concatenation of atoms" laughed as raucously off the platform as were Crookes and Lodge in their time. For the revolutionaries in science are waxing exceeding bold. To one of the boldest of them[1] we are indebted for a new, yet logical and quite polite name for materialistic dogma—"Cartesianism." It is the truth that Descartes was the modern exponent, long before Haeckel, Tyndall, and Spencer, of the idea that facts are everything and truth—that is to say, a comprehensive understanding of the bearing of facts—negligible.

It is a pity that Prof. Kepner's caustic and far-seeing critique on Cartesianism cannot be reprinted in full.

> . . . Our conviction in the reality of bread has caused us to neglect the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come." Bread, not personality, has been considered real by men and mankind finds itself in a muddle.
>
> Science has been responsible for this situation. She has been under the sway of Cartesianism during the nineteenth century. The Cartesian revolution was launched by Descartes in the early seventeenth century. Prior to Descartes even men like Kepler and Galileo were seeking rather "divine perfec-

[1]Prof. Wm. A. Kepner, Miller School of Biology, University of Virginia, in *Science*, July 6, 1934.

tion and purpose" than "sober description."

. . . Following this revolution, "Purposes gave way to mathematics, human will and foresight to immutable and inflexible mechanical order." Since Descartes, amoebae have been compelled to ingest food; birds to fly because they were mere machines and youths to aspire to win maidens because of the complex concatenation of circumstances that was behind them and of the fortuitous concourse of atoms that was within them. The reaction of an amoeba, the flight of a bird, and the aspirations of men were all determined by what came to be considered the result of "chemic compulsion."

Thus biologists find themselves in a peculiar position as they are confronted with the two mysteries—matter and life. Under the influence of Cartesianism they have chosen the former.

Hence they have the peculiar habit either of defining their sciences as that of life and then hastily reducing life to terms of protoplasm or of referring to it as the science of living matter. They avoid life with its implications of purpose and cooperation.

This attitude on the part of the biologists arises out of the influence of Darwinism, which brought the reign of law into the realm of life. The theory of the survival of the fittest was applied to biological processes in the most detailed manner. I was taught, for example, that I existed only because of the nicely balanced struggle, that was maintained in my body, between its cells and tissues for the necessary materials with which to maintain their respective combustions. Within living forms, there was only struggle. There could be no cooperation. Cartesianism applied to biology, therefore, put cooperation, life itself, out of the universe.

But turn where we will, where we find life there we find cooperation. In our own laboratory we frequently witness two or more amoeba-like animals fusing, as though they were droplets of fluid, in order that a large food-object might be "swallowed" and digested. After the meal has been appropriated the cooperating individuals separate.

Who of us, who saw in Dr. Speidel's film last year a phagocyte struggling until it entered the sarcolemma of a nerve and picked up and carried away a foreign particle from within the sarcolemma, was not impressed with the cooperative aspect of this conduct? . . .

Life, however, is purposive as well as cooperative. Indeed, cooperation seems to imply purposiveness.

It is because of this purposiveness that I was able to point out some years ago that physicists and chemists differed from biologists in that they need only the phrase "as a result of," in referring to their facts, whereas the biologists are compelled to use the phrase "in order that."

This distinction yet holds. I was greatly impressed with the apparent scientific attitude of a recent psychobiographer who would consider all the conduct of his subject to be the result of the subject's past experience. His subject, for example, had a keen sense of right and wrong, which arose out of his experiences when his mother weaned him. As a result of having been weaned the world was no longer entirely good; there was also wrong. As a result of all this a keen sense of right and wrong had been developed in the subject's mind. Throughout the first half of the book the psychobiographer got along fairly well with the phrase "as a result of." But near the middle of the book he fell from his strictly scientific attitude; for he said, "The censor (conscience) has been built up in order to keep the ego in check." This is the purposiveness that even a psychobiographer must recognize in life.

I have been told that one biologist is revising his text-book with the object of using only the phrase "as a result of" and deleting anything that may imply the phrase "in order that." To my mind this will be a difficult task; but even if accomplished it is needless. For the book is being revised *in order that* it may be ultra-scientific. A mechanistic biologist must needs show purpose, for he too lives. . . .

. . . Matter in an organism is therefore transient. It has been estimated that there is a complete turnover of material in one's body every seven years. Hence it was a foolish Japanese who, after having lived in the United States for twenty years, had decreed that his body should be burned and the ashes sent back to dear old Japan from whence they had come. Good old American ashes had been sent back to Japan. The material of his body had been transient, but his personality had persisted during those twenty years.

Nuttycombe and I have held an animal that eats another animal and appropriates the "loaded guns" (nematocysts) of its victim away from the "gunmaker" for twenty-six asexual generations. . . . Regeneration of lost parts was followed by normal conduct toward "gun-makers" and their "guns." It is true that the individuals in all these generations represented but one gene complex; but taking cognizance of that point, the peculiar fact remains that even genes must respire

and that matter, therefore, had come and gone through countless numbers of gene-generations. Matter in the case of microstomum was transient, but the manifestation of life had persisted.

In the purposive, cooperative effort of life and in its persistence throughout the metabolic flow of matter, biologists are confronted with characteristics that are peculiar.

The Cartesian dogma would ignore these characteristics of life. Many biologists yet consider that they can not afford to recognize these phenomena. To do so would jeopardize their scientific attitude. . . . The psychists and chemists are becoming less dogmatic in their conception of matter and the atom as an ultimate force of reality. The concept of the atom is changing and in the case of hydrogen is considered to be nearly empty. One physicist speaks of matter as being a "derivative of consciousness." Others claim that matter may be reduced to terms of energy or electricity. Finally, no scientist is prepared to tell us what electricity, of which protons and electrons may be composed, is. One has in all this a decline of the attitude that had been assumed by scientists since Descartes. . . . Huxley, Wells and Jeans, in reviewing the knowledge men have of psychic phenomena, conclude that "mind and matter are two aspects of universal stuff."

Some scientists have, therefore, departed far from the idea that the atom of matter represents ultimate reality and life is no longer held to be a product of matter. Matter may be electricity. Electricity and life may be two phases of reality.

I have never seen electricity perish and I have never seen life die.

At this point Prof. Kepner interjects a conversation between himself and his daughter which would well indeed be printed in every Theosophical children's book; in lieu of that ought to be used by every Theosophical teacher.

"Daddy, have these fish died and their souls gone to heaven?"

"Little Lida, do you know what electricity is?"

"Of course I do, have I not been shocked by it when I put my fingers into the outlet by the floor?"

"Do you know what life is?"

"Of course I do; am I not alive?"

"Now then, I may be in a position to answer your questions concerning these fish. Can you see electricity by means of your brother's electric locomotive?"

"Yes, for if electricity is there, it runs."

"If while it runs one breaks the engine, does that destroy electricity?"

"No."

"If a mechanic repair the locomotive can you again see electricity by means of the repaired engine?"

"Yes."

"Well, the situation with reference to these fish is similar (analogous). Life, like electricity, is everywhere. Our bodies are like machines through which we see life in one another. When these bodies break we can no longer see life, just as when an electric toy is broken we can no longer see electricity manifested. Now these fish's bodies are broken machines. Were I an expert biologist, I could repair them and then you would again see life manifested by these bodies. You may some day see my body break, but that will not necessarily mean that the life you recognize as Daddy will die. Living daddies and their daughters never die, though their bodies break and disintegrate in time."

The little girl closed our conversation with, "I like dat story, Daddy."

Prof. Kepner's conclusion is scientifically splendid and Theosophically impeccable.

So I close my address by reminding you that Cartesianism is becoming less a dogma. This dogma has led us to an unsatisfactory social situation, wherein the "ever-increasing beauty and power of science are manifest"; but wherein "the power of religion" has not "grown to render impossible hate and strife between races and nations" and individuals.

Perhaps the next generation of biologists will look upon protoplasm as the "medium of vital manifestation" rather than the physical basis of life and thus establish a better foundation upon which to build the social and personal progress of human beings. Humanity has been admonished to seek life rather than things.

RECONCILIATION POSSIBLE

In esoteric teachings, the most transcendental conceptions of the universe and its mysteries, as the most (seemingly) materialistic speculations are found reconciled, because those sciences embrace the whole scope of evolution from Spirit to matter.—*S. D.* I, 623.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS' FORUM

A MASTER once wrote, "The humblest worker is seen and helped." Could one not, then, receive just as much of that help if he studied by himself, as if he worked with other students?

The Master's words are: "Ingratitude is not one of our faults. We always help those who help us. Tact, discretion, and zeal are more than ever needed. The humblest worker is seen and helped." . . . (Quoted from "The Path"—August, 1891—a time when attempts to supersede H. P. B. were being made).

The Master cannot pour wisdom into a person. All attainment is through "self-induced and self-devised efforts." "Those who help us" karmically receive Master's help from the spiritual storehouse within themselves. This help consists in a lighting of the latent fires of mind, or consciousness; then, the feeding of fuel in direct proportion to individual merit. Masters, more than all others, are karmic agents who never interfere with the justice of Nature's Laws. Therefore, the crux of the matter is this: What is Master's work, and how may we best perform it?

Briefly, the White Lodge preserves and cyclically presents the Philosophy for mankind. We must make it our own and help promulgate it. By forgetting self and working for others progress is made. So, unmindful of his own needs, the self-reliant servant of humanity opens inner founts of strength with each assumption of responsibility. It is practical application that counts—not mere intellectual appreciation of the grandeur of the Teachings.

Every Theosophist re-discovers the Wisdom religion through friend, book, meeting, or circumstance of birth. Shall he be guilty of that occult sin—ingratitude—by taking all he can, and making no return? Does not honest duty demand that he help other pilgrims to re-gain the Truth? And how would those others "get" Theosophy without a group to preserve it in its fullness and purity?

The first object of the Theosophical Movement is the formation of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. If each student went off by himself to seek personal benefits, what would become of the nucleus and Theosophy in the world? "Come ye out and be separate" means to escape from the evils of the race *mind,* not from association with the race. Of course, anyone karmically situated away from other students may constitute in himself a center of Theosophy. Those who want the Truth will gravitate naturally

to such an one, along intangible magnetic lines which radiate from every focus of spiritual effort.

Sometimes, a person strays from the Movement because of those ignorant people who stigmatize Theosophy. He may think: "Well, I just won't call it that, and I won't associate with other students. They don't seem perfect yet." This is another phase of separateness and ingratitude. The name "Theosophy" was good enough for the Masters and the Teachers. There is power and glory in it. Mr. Judge advised changing the name of "The Path" magazine to "Theosophy" magazine for this reason.

We are all interdependent and indissolubly linked by myriad ties of past actions and emotions. Even the most self-sufficient person must find solace and reassurance among those who have a common cause. The very walls of a Lodge reflect comfort to the Seeker for Truth. There, he is able to clarify his understanding of the principles, tie together ragged bits of knowledge, weed out misconceptions, and polish all his rough ideas. The experience of thousands of years of the degeneration of religions, repeated in the pseudo "successors" and sects of Theosophy since 1875, demonstrate that the methods of the United Lodge of Theosophists are the most practical and efficient possible for this era. The absence of leaders and rules, and the voluntary basis of all work allow the student complete spiritual independence. With "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching", each student becomes a strand in the mighty spiritual cable which some day will encompass the globe.

How do you explain that even the power of delusion is from Spirit?

(*a*) Delusion is the result of the failure to use our spiritual power, rather than a force in itself. In this sense, it denotes passivity, for the assertion of the true Self dispels it. Ultimately analyzed, all things have a spiritual basis and aspect.

The *Gita* says: "He who attendeth to the inclinations of the senses, in them hath a concern; from this concern is created passion, from passion anger, from anger is produced delusion, from delusion a loss of the memory, from the loss of memory loss of discrimination, and from loss of discrimination loss of all!" This sequence is rooted in the primordial constitution of the universe.

Because of previous systems, under Law, the Absolute periodically manifests itself; first—"speaking metaphysically as to time—is Spirit with which appears Matter and Mind." Evolution of the universe, earth and humanity, proceeds along spiritual, mental and physical lines according to the plan in Universal Mind. The

culmination now is Man, with septenary nature. Individual achievement of Union with the Self, the goal of life, depends on the integration and perfect co-ordination of man's vehicles. Altruistic usage of all lives "tunes" their vibrations to consonance with the Self.

Manas, the Thinker, must bridge the gap between Spirit—the homogeneous power to know—and the transitory and plastic material planes of action—the thing to be known—"storing" the accumulated experience in *Buddhi,* or spiritual discernment. At present, this connecting link is not fully active, the principle of *Kama,* or Desire being uppermost. Since the lower reasoning aspect of mind is nearest the Desire principle and bound to it, delusion arises from the influence of Desire on *Manas.*

A practical application of this abstract consideration is intensely realistic. The Theosophist is aware of the Perceiver within, understanding, seeming to smile compassionately when he gets "muddled." He knows that the physical body responds to proper treatment. It is his mind and passional nature that are the scene of strong conflicting tendencies, emotions and thoughts; and here, Arjuna-like, he fights the battle against delusion and illusion. He strives to place his aspirations and noblest thoughts in the ascendency, knowing that this is the way to evoke the power of Self which one day will consummate the conquest of self.

(*b*) As in the case of all other "pairs of opposites", reality and delusion are not absolute and fixed values, but vary according to the spiritual horizon of the perceiver. All realities other than the unmanifested and changeless Self are of an empirical nature and exist as such only in our minds. The idol of the savage derives its very real power over his life through his conception of it as possessed of supernatural force. Thus, as our experience and understanding grow, the ideas which were realities become delusions of the past, yet of real service to us, nevertheless, for they have been steps on the path to knowledge—"*Purusha* (spirit) is spoken of as something impotent unless he mounts on the shoulders of *Prakriti* (matter), which, left alone, is—senseless."

The Monad, or power to perceive, is a ray of Absoluteness, and it cannot even be called spirit, says H. P. B. From this absolute point of view, all perceptions are delusive because they arise in and as a result of manifestation. "Spirit is matter *on the seventh plane*; matter is Spirit—on the lowest point of its cyclic activity; and both —are MAYA." Spirit is the creative aspect of Nature, matter the medium of her creations. Essentially homogeneous, in manifesta-

tion they appear as separate and opposed; they are the polarities of the one Root-Principle of the universe.

Every form which Spirit evolves contains the potentiality of both delusion and reality—which it becomes depends upon the point of view of the observer. Krishna speaks: "Even though myself unborn, of changeless essence, and the lord of all existence, yet in presiding over nature—which is mine—I am born but through my own *maya**, the mystic power of self-ideation, the eternal thought in the eternal mind.**" The illusionary aspect of life is the form which it occupies—the visible phenomenon; the noumenal aspect is that of the indwelling, formless and eternally evolving spirit-intelligence which is in the body and which has made the form. Form derives its appearance of reality from the power of Spirit to project its ideation into the substance of all planes: hence, delusion, or the mistaking of form for reality, is traceable to Spirit.

The place and function of delusion in human thought and evolution have long puzzled western philosophers. We well know that many of our past conceptions have been fictions, and yet, we have come through to our present position of great knowledge. By the same token, many of the ideas we regard today as true must be false, albeit we know not which; but in spite of this, we go on without mortal mishap. How is this possible?

Havelock Ellis in *The Dance of Life* describes how Hans Vaihinger, German philosopher, deals with this question:

> "The problem which Vaihinger set out to solve was this: How comes it about that with consciously false ideas we yet reach conclusions that are in harmony with Nature and appeal to us as Truth?"

At this point we may insert parenthetically the solution offered by Krishna in the ninth chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "And even those who worship other gods with a firm faith in doing so, involuntarily worship me, too, O son of Kunti, albeit in ignorance."

But Mr. Ellis, in discussing Vaihinger's speculations, offers no such cogent solution. He says:

> "We can never solve the so-called world-riddle because what seem riddles to us are merely the contradictions we have ourselves created. . . . We make our own world; when we make it awry, we can remake it, approximately

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**Maya*, Illusion.

***See also the *Varaha Upanishad* of *Krishna-Yajur Veda, viz.*: "The whole of the universe is evolved through Sankalpa [thought or ideation] alone; it is only through Sankalpa that the universe retains its appearance."

truer, though it cannot be absolutely true, to the facts. It will never be finally made; we are always stretching forth to larger and better fictions which answer more truly to our growing knowledge and experience. Even when we walk, it is only by a series of regulated errors, Vaihinger well points out—a perpetual succession of falls to one side and to the other side. Our whole progress through life is of the same nature; all thinking is a regulated error. . . . It is in the choice and regulation of our errors, in our readiness to accept ever-closer approximations to the unattainable reality, that we think rightly and live rightly."

Now, let us see how close the above approximation has come to the esoteric facts of the case:

"Maya or illusion is an element which enters into all finite things, for everything that exists has only a relative, not an absolute, reality, since the appearance which the hidden noumenon assumes for any observer depends upon his power of cognition. To the untrained eye of the savage, a painting is at first an unmeaning confusion of streaks and daubs of colour, while an educated eye sees instantly a face or a landscape. Nothing is permanent except the one hidden absolute existence which contains in itself the noumena of all realities. The existences belonging to every plane of being, up to the highest Dhyan-Chohans, are, in degree, of the nature of shadows cast by a magic lantern on a colourless screen; but all things are relatively real, for the cogniser is also a reflection, and the things cognised are therefore as real to him as himself. Whatever reality things possess must be looked for in them before or after they have passed like a flash through the material world; but we cannot cognise any such existence directly, so long as we have sense-instruments which bring only material existence into the field of our consciousness. Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality;" but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya." (*Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 39-40).

It is evident that in a world composed wholly of realities and mayas having only *relative* significance, the important thing is not

an exhaustive analysis of each in an attempt to measure and classify its evanescent nature; but rather to maintain a persistent concentration on the *Goal.* The landmarks of a journey are not intrinsically valuable, it is the *direction* that they indicate which counts. Motive is moral direction, hence it is said that the act itself is nothing compared to the motive which gave it life.

If the Self in us is the Power to Know, why is it that we sometimes seem unable to know just what is the right thing to do?

Man is inherently divine. The Self can always distinguish good from evil. Though we sometimes seem uncertain, the Immortal Ego is ever aware of the proper course of action. If we appeal to the highest in us, help is given. Call it intuition, conscience, or inspiration, the real man is the Knower and is able to bring his knowledge through to lower planes, else evolution would be impossible. For progress has to be made within the soul, then mirrored in the denser substances.

Each moment, its power of choice offers the Self opportunity for soul growth. The Law brings what is earned and needed. We never precipitate our Karma in "doses" too heavy to bear. But, if we have not learned how to meet life's problems, we often choose wrongly even with the best of motives. True enough—"The road to hell is paved with good intentions." Wisdom must direct the channel in which motive colors the flowing waters of our actions. When the inexorable tide of Law carries our rivers back through the kingdoms to their source in us, it is the black pigment of selfish motive or the white tint of selfless effort which determines the effect. While the dark whirlpools threaten to engulf, the pure streams refresh and encourage us.

However, we do make mistakes. The original reason is the Ego's voluntary incarnation in a new field of evolution. He is in an unfamiliar element, working to emancipate the soul by right impulse to his creations. Unable to manifest his knowledge, he now guides himself with the haphazard incomplete theories of religion or science, swimming with the masses in the current of contemporary cyclical trends, groping for the life-line of Theosophy. Realization of the "Three Fundamentals" pilots him to the ever-widening harbor of perfection.

STUDIES IN THE OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY

XXVI

CONSIDERATION of the subject of death naturally raises the question as to communication if possible with those left behind. Theosophy answers that, although not actually beholding our dear ones, "we make to ourselves their images as full, complete and objective as in life, and devoid of all that we then thought was a blemish." In illustration is cited the case of the deceased mother of a drunken son enjoying his companionship as "a sober, good man". And such fulfillment of the heart's desire in *Devachan* holds good "likewise through all possible cases."

The dead suffer no bereavement; and for the sorrow of the living Nature has much to offer as an anodyne, were her constitution and laws apprehended. For "entities in *devachan* are not wholly devoid of power to help those left on earth. Love, the master of life, if real, pure, and deep, will sometimes cause the happy Ego in *devachan* to affect those left on earth for their good, not only in the moral field but also in that of material circumstances." Furthermore, there is consolation in the teaching that while the body sleeps, the Soul may ascend to the *devachanee,* merge into his consciousness, feel and think with him, then bring this experience back to waking as a vivid dream or sense of nearness. In this, the dead are usually portrayed as the visitants; but the opposite is the case. *Re-embodiment* is the one path of return.

The evanescence of objective existence and the inevitability of death seem to have little effect upon Man's tendency to identify himself with the physical. To the extent that this is done, heart-to-heart communion is by so much precluded. So, after all, this leaves much to be desired for human association here on earth in general; and it is possible for mutual understanding to be so modified, even among those of closest ties and deepest affection, that real communication is only approximate. Perhaps only in rare moments may the love and devotion felt find adequate expression.

Yet, however imperfect, who would not cling to these fond associations and find desolation in their loss! Theosophy regards not lightly, but with reverence, the solemn event of death; nor does it minimize the devastating agony that sweeps over the bereaved. There is no cry of pain to which the Great Teachers are indifferent. Having fathomed the human heart, They both sympathize

and heal. No rebuke is directed towards longing for the warm, living touch of those snatched away by death, but there is rebuke directed against illegitimate attempts to reach the beloved dead—those foolish, vain efforts to set aside the natural order of things. Topically considered, it is surprising what a mighty block of warning is scattered through the pages of the "Ocean" regarding the imminent dangers attending efforts to interview the dead. This particular chapter stresses the impossibility of success, stating unequivocally: "We cannot reach them nor affect them unless we are Adepts. The claim of mediums to hold communion with the spirits of the dead is baseless, and still less valid is the claim of ability to help those who have gone to *devachan.*" Soul communion will never be found in the seance room nor by any mediumistic practice. All that can be gained from these is contact with discarded garments, left to disintegrate on the astral plane—dead men, indeed, with influence so contaminating as to prevent genuine spiritual communion through the avenues of sleep. But he who bows to Nature's edicts shall reap her solace; and if philosophical understanding be added, the remaining years on earth will be blessed with assurance of re-union in future incarnations.

One single exception is made to the futility of alleged psychical communications with dwellers in the mansions of Soul. And this exception would seem to be involuntary action, rather than an *attempt* to reach the spiritual realms. Sometimes, "the hypersensitive and pure medium goes into this state and then holds communication with the Egos there, but it is rare, and certainly will not take place with the general run of mediums who trade for money. And the gulf between the consciousness of *devachan* and that of earth is so deep and wide that it is but seldom the medium can remember upon returning to recollection here what or whom it met or saw or heard in *devachan.*"

The very vesture in which the man in *Devachan* functions secures a subjectivity too profound to permit response to the clamorings of the physical world. Unbreakable barriers guard the sanctuary of the disembodied Ego, wherein he exercises his spiritual rights of creative thought. How could beings clothed in gross matter and motivated by selfishness gain access to souls arrayed in substance attenuated beyond human conception and responsive to only the loftiest stirrings of the higher nature!

If the charge of selfishness seems unjust, let the would-be communicant ask himself who is the supposed beneficiary. Could it be partakers of celestial ecstacies, conceded to lack naught? If not,

why should begrimed earth dwellers, unsuitably robed and far from blissful, proceed to mar the exquisiteness of the fair "summer land"! Why inject discord into Heaven, when all benefits would accrue to the living, themselves due to touch the other shore, ere long? Such impatience seems out of keeping with candidates for Paradise and little betokening the Christian grace of submission to God, who in his wisdom, has ordained a temporary separation!

Even in case of close, interior connection, the analysis of attempted inter-communication between the embodied and the discarnate discloses unsound thought and feeling; but wholesale efforts to break into the spiritual realm or to drag its inhabitants from their abiding place, to float around seance cabinets, is superlatively intrusive. Imagine the complications and possible heartaches, were the claims of Spiritualism *bona fide!* An exaggeration of all the hazards of social life would prevail, both here and yonder. The hosts of Heaven would be in worse case than the house-mothers of pioneer days, always subject to wagon-loads of unexpected company; for the latter had, at least, made previous acquaintance with their guests; while the former could be unceremoniously pounced upon by anyone. Then, too, should dear ones on earth forget the departed and fill up their places with others, there would be nothing to veil the fact. Were avenues of free intercourse established between the physical and the metaphysical spheres, ghosts could walk here at inopportune times and where least welcome; and the peace of *Devachan* would be disrupted by many distasteful interviews.

Kind Nature forbids commingling of this workaday world with the after-death state of bliss and rest. There are no uncongenialities for the *devachanee,* nor any embarrassing situations. All that was formerly disliked is now non-existent. The personnel and character of all contacts are just what preference calls for, the mind drifting according to fancies, with the ebb and flow of happy feelings. Should the momentary object of devotion be enjoying more agreeable companionship, no slight is suffered thereby. Neither does the envisaging of the dead interfere with the living. And, just as truly, no yearning of the living can break in upon the meditations of *Devachan.*

The true doctrine thus reveals the utter impossibility of crashing the gates of higher realms, invisible and inviolable; as well it reveals many ludicrous angles in the claims of seer and necromancer. Not the least is the probability, in some instances of alleged communication with the dead, that the "departed" have already *re-*

turned. This, of course, could happen in the case of a child less than seven years of age at demise, but could also occur with an adult of materialistic leanings. For it is stated that a "materialistic thinker may emerge out of *devachan* into another body here in a month, allowing for the unexpended psychic forces originated in early life"; and still more unreachable would be the *desperately* materialistic thinkers, who "remain in the devachanic condition stupefied or asleep, as it were", and for whom "it can be very truly said that there is no state after death so far as mind is concerned; they are torpid for awhile, and then they live again on earth."

We may, perhaps, resent any intimation of materialism on the part of our beloved; but what are our standards for judgment? Schooling, culture, accomplishment, social graces, personal winsomeness, tasteful apparel—none of these, nor many other things highly prized in the world, are criteria. The Teachers say that even a soulless being may possess all of them. Materialism is the focusing of the mind no higher than the purely intellectual plane of thought.

Evidently, *Duty* is the "royal talisman" even for alleviation of the sorrow of bereavement. Intelligent, unselfish service for Humanity is the great panacea, consisting of the cheerful performance of the tasks presented by *Karma.* Faithful fulfillment of duty must needs lead to the fulfillment of every just desire. *Karma* and *Reincarnation* are the lost chords of the Music of Life; their lack introducing discord into all its movements. *Karma* shows the justice and, therefore, the hidden beneficence of all necessary separations by death; *Reincarnation* assures of reunion and compensation for the temporary loss.

The less time spent in devachanic dreaming, the sooner will those cherished meetings, here, take place. The more men strive to live as *souls,* the less can flesh veil their hearts from each other, and the greater the satisfaction found in their associations. The loftiest imaginings of *Devachan* reveal their selfishness and lack compared with the ideal of Man's true destiny and the marvellous processes involved in its consummation. These processes include every variety of human association—best of all loving comradeship in which fellow travellers journey, not selfishly, but the while reinforcing each other's efforts to uplift and further the evolution of the Human Race.

ON THE LOOKOUT

"A Panorama of Desolation"

We may help nature and work on with her, or by misuse or abuse bring about devastation. This truism finds its application on every plane of being, physical nature affording a graphic illustration. The "Panorama of Desolation Seen In Plane View of Drought Area" was reported in the New York *Times,* August 1, 1934:

> A vivid picture of the devastated drought area is seen as one travels by airplane over the arid plains of the Southwest into this (Kansas) city, now, as in the days of Indians and buffalo, the great trading center between the Midwest and the Southwest. Coming directly from the well-irrigated valleys below San Francisco and the lush vegetation around Los Angeles, and recalling the fertile fields of the East a fortnight ago, one is deeply impressed by the contrast. . . .
>
> Today the whole landscape is a picture of desolation. For hundreds of miles, over one State after another, the plane roars, and hardly a drop of water is visible. In many long reaches not a tree is to be seen, not a blade of grass, not an animal of any kind, not a single living thing.
>
> Below lie the beds of empty rivers and streams, for all the world as if they were caked hard by the scorching sun, and winding across the countryside as if they were impressions in the ground made by some sort of prehistoric serpents. . . .
>
> In every direction the dry, wasted land extends further than the eye can reach. It makes one think of a stricken giant, stretched out flat upon his back, thirsting for water, staring blindly into the mercilessly hot sun and gasping for breath. Before one's very eyes a whole section of the country lies dying. One cannot help joining the people who live there in a silent prayer for the rain which will bring it back to life. . . .

A Larger Significance

This is a picture in small, and in some aspects only, of how even continents may be changed. All is life; its disappearance in one form means its reappearance in another, whether on this or a different plane of being. Perhaps it was an instinctive sense of this fact which called forth the thought of "the stricken giant." However, the devastation was brought about by human selfishness and ignorance with consequent pain and suffering. While the good

thought in consideration for the sufferers which prompted the silent prayer for rain is commendable, the Theosophist knows that prayer itself is useless. The rain ceases and prayers are made, but the dryness continues. An understanding of nature's law and a determination to work with it, is the only worthwhile prayer—right thought in action.

"BACK TO NATURE'S WAY"

A New York *Sun* editorial under this title traces the chain of cause and effect leading to the summer's drought and devastation:

> The farmer thought it was progress when, under the spur of war-time prices for wheat, he skinned the buffalo grass from the semi-arid lands of the Dakotas and Nebraska, drained the ponds and marshes to reach the rich soil below and built ditches and sluices to dispose quickly of snow and surface water. If he knew that this was a region so delicately balanced by Nature that it needed every drop of the normal precipitation, he did not care. Why let a stream or a tree stand in the way of $2.26 wheat?
>
> Nature, which does not read the market quotations, killed the wheat at its roots, blew the topsoil from the farms a thousand miles, dried the rivers and the wells, killed the cattle with drought and starvation and brought ambitious men literally to his knees. "If you will Chinafy this place," Nature seemed to say, "let me help you. I can make a desert quicker than you think."
>
> Now we come to another form of progress in the undoing of what the farmers did. A strip 100 miles wide from the Canadian border to the Texas Panhandle is to be planted with trees, the long rows a mile apart. Between the rows, when the growth is enough, farms can expect protection from wind and drought. It will be years before the forestation is finished and the Government will have spent $75,000,000 in doing what the farmer himself should have done.

METEORIC SHOWERS

In August, 1932, special note was made in the New York *Times* of "The Meteors that Bombard Our World":

> Hundreds of millions of meteors constitute the Perseids. Each is a planet no bigger than a pebble. The endless procession marches around the sun in about 108 years—in a

path that cuts the earth's orbit in August. It will take weeks for the earth to cross the procession because of its breadth of 50,000,000 miles. . . .

According to Professor Moulton, more than 20,000,000 meteors strike the earth every day—virtually all in the form of small grains of dust to which they have been reduced by combustion. . . .

As recently as July 19, 1912, about 14,000 fell in Arizona. The record seems to be held by showers of 100,000 that were seen at Pultusk, in Poland, on Jan. 30, 1868, and at Mocs, Hungary, on Feb. 3, 1882.

Reign of Law in Heaven and Earth

"When the Sky Rains Stone and Iron," writes H. H. Nininger in the *Literary Digest,* March 17, 1934, the heavenly phenomena amaze and appal mankind. There is no evidence of their ever actually injuring mankind itself, as though the meteors had no direct Karmic connection with man on earth. We hear from time to time of such news as "Exploding Meteor Rocks Central Alberta Homes" (New York *Times,* March 19, 1934), but those which do strike earth land in some open spaces. Hence, there is no good reason for their appearance to fill the hearts of men with dread, unless it be his own conscience. This may be one reason why meteors were always so sacredly regarded in olden times. However casual they may be, meteors are none the less moving under law.

Meteoric Periodicity and Expanse

Says Mr. Nininger:

> On the nights of November 13 and 14, 1883, the world was visited with what was perhaps the greatest meteoric shower on record. The heavens were literally filled with "falling stars," many of them as brilliant as Venus at her best. Again on the same dates in November, 1866, another unusual shower occurred; and it was then discovered that similar big showers had taken place regularly, at periods of one-third of a century, for more than one thousand years. There were several gaps in the record, but they may have been merely the fault of negligent historians.

Speaking of hitherto mysterious scars on our planet, the writer remarks:

> The greatest of the scars—vastly greater than all the

> others put together—is composed of more than three thousand craters, covering an area of almost forty thousand square miles along our Atlantic seaboard, between Norfolk, Virginia, and the Savannah River. There, long before the dawn of history, a gigantic comet, twice as large as Halley's, is believed to have plunged to earth. The great masses of iron in its head, if they had been gathered in a single spherical body, would probably have measured one hundred miles in diameter. . . .
>
> Other scars on the earth, where smaller comets are believed to have fallen, are located in Argentina, in Central Australia, in Afghanistan and Arabia, and on the Isle of Essel in the Baltic. At least a dozen of them have been pretty certainly identified in recent years. One is near Odessa, Texas, and another is in north-central Siberia where an enormous meteorite hurtled down from the sky in 1908, mowing flat more than seven hundred square miles of forest. . . . How many more comet heads lie buried beneath craters now effaced by time? How many lie hidden at the bottoms of the oceans which cover three-quarters of the earth's surface? We know that thousands upon thousands of smaller fragments are scattered everywhere. . . .
>
> There is probably not an area five miles square anywhere in the United States, where at least one meteorite is not waiting to be found. Countless others have fallen into dust. I believe, indeed, that the very ground on which we walk is composed largely of matter which once hailed down from the sky.

NEW QUESTIONS FROM OLD

In an article entitled "Meteors Raise New Questions as Studies Progress," appearing in the *Literary Digest* for July 14, 1934, it is observed.

> Another matter brought to light by research is the amount of meteoric material which daily reaches the earth. Mr. Nininger estimated that the mass of even the smallest visible meteors is much greater than has been supposed. From Little America, in the Antarctic, came evidence that a billion or more of these projectiles are entrapped by the earth's atmosphere daily.

Now it is known in Theosophy that although the amount of star dust accumulated by the earth is minute compared to its total mass, it is nevertheless appreciable in the course of aeons and ages. This is very significant.

Perplexing "Science"

An editorial entitled: "This Perplexing Universe" which appeared in the New York *Times,* April 25, 1934, clearly reflects the increasing perplexity of modern science so far as discerning fundamental principles and giving rational explanations of the universe is concerned:

> What does "seeing" mean when we deal with vast distances, vast reaches of time? Even Eddington, the stanchest advocate of an inflated universe, insists that "there are no purely observational facts about the heavenly bodies." What we profess to "see" are events that ocurred hundreds of billions of years ago—at a time when the solar system was not even in existence. And the seeing occurs in a terrestrial observatory.
>
> . . . we cannot behold these galaxies and suns without wondering about their meaning. But we must also admit that the meaning is probably wrong. . . .
>
> Twenty years ago no one would have thought of questioning evidence of the kind submitted in favor of expanding space. Now, with an infinite number of possible universes to choose from, who can say that the one in which we momentarily believe, the one younger than its own stars, is right?

To this Theosophy will essentially agree; but what no true Theosophist will agree to is that "we need hypotheses" in the speculative sense to further inflate man's universe of thought as he has inflated almost everything he could.

Questions for the Race

Every now and then we hear of "New Dimensions Given to Universe," as reported in the *Times,* April 24, 1934, but however expansive, these are simply the limitations of finite minds. When the Ancient Wisdom shall be given more fearless and honest consideration, the dawn of a truer enlightenment shall spread over the earth. A few excellent observations from both a spiritual and practical point of view were made in an editorial: "The Metagalaxy" in the *Times* of May 14, 1934. It is therein observed:

> What does this immensity mean? What is the underlying Plan? These are questions not for one man but for the race. Not even a glimmering of the structure that holds a billion stellar systems together can be perceived after a lifetime of

> searching. Hence, Professor Shapley lays down a program which confidently assumes that one generation of astronomers will take up the work where old age overcomes its predecessor. . . . The history of nations may be one long tale of war, economic disaster and changing institutions. Yet to this testator of a scientific task there is something in the human soul which flowers when it contemplates the glory and the mystery of these myriads of stars and which can be trusted with a spiritual legacy.

What greater spiritual legacy is there than a Wisdom that can guide wisely and beneficently such researches aright, and bestow on mankind that which can not only give the meaning, but enable mankind to rise thereby to greater, nobler and higher life? Shall the soul prove itself worthy? As a Teacher once said, "There is hope for man only in man."

"THIS HALOED EARTH!"

Says an editorial entitled "This Haloed Earth" in the *Times* for July 23, 1934:

> In Nature, Professor Mimno of Harvard presents evidence of the existence of two new electric shells around the earth. All told, we now have five—the Kennelly-Heaviside layer postulated in 1902, the Appleton layer beyond that, the two new Mimno layers, and far out beyond the moon the layer first discovered by Hals and verified by Carl Stoermer. Little did Marconi suspect when he began his experiments in wireless telegraphy that he had invented a means for exploring space and visualizing an earthly atmosphere of onion-like structure. "Ionosphere" the nearer layers of this atmospheric onion are now collectively called. Although it is known only by its electric manifestations, there can be no doubt that this ionosphere is as truly part of our air as the lowermost troposphere in which we live and move, and the strathosphere which is about to be explored again.
>
> . . . Close to the surface a sapphire atmosphere flashes resplendently in the reflected light of the sun, and surrounding this are shells that shimmer electrically as the ultraviolet rays of the sun strike them with varying intensity or as electrons hurled from sun spots play havoc with occasional atoms in the highly rarefied air. Far beyond arches the colossal halo of electrons which Stoermer has made his special study.
>
> . . . There's poetry in the equations of the physicists

> who send radio waves out into space, catch reflections of their own wireless questions hurled at the cosmos, and deduce wonders that transcend those described in "De Rerum Natura," or any ancient cosmology, and poetry in a certain green spectral line that betrays the existence of tenuous oxygen hundreds of miles beyond the surface. Is there no way by which we can behold this new grandeur? . . . these glowing shells that the mind's eye can see are real. They are as much a part of the earth as green grass or tossing wave.

"The Sinister Island"

"The Sinister Island" is the title of an article by the English philosopher, C. E. M. Joad, in the literary *John O'London's Weekly* for August 4. Holidaying in Scotland, the island of Skye suggested,

> "the presence of an intelligence, malignant, hostile, tolerating with difficulty *the ten thousand inhabitants who wring a meagre living from its grudging soil* and bitterly resentful of visitors and their invading cars . . . as one drove one felt that the high hills were trying to push one's intrusive car off the road altogether into the sea. . . . I was very far from coming to terms with the spirit that presided over those miles of mountain and bog. I had the feeling that obscurely the island resented me, that it would be rid of me at the earliest possible moment if not by one method then by another."

He then discourses on the exceptionally heavy rainfall, makes clear that he does not like walking on roads, but in Skye to leave the road is to be "bogged half-way up to your knees", nor is he a rock climber and "Skye is the rock climber's paradise." Ascending the hills,

> "I had once again the feeling that they were trying to push me off their steep, uncompromising sides down to the sea that lapped their bases. . . . I do not know if I have succeeded in conveying the mood of vigilance, of disquietude even, that this strange island engendered in me. . . . I felt that I *was* being watched—watched hostilely and with suspicion, as by some mischievous alien agency, which, misliking my invasion of its solitudes, was perpetually alert to trip me up and pay me out, if I gave it the chance."

Mysterious and fascinating as this is meant to be, those who would understand its meaning will find in the writings of W. Q. Judge what would naturally explain it. In the last chapter of

Echoes from the Orient the influences of the Astral Light are set before us, "the register of our deeds and thoughts, the great picture gallery of the earth." For those 10,000 people wringing a meagre living from grudging soil in an island of much rain and many bogs, life would indeed be the reverse of pleasant as the world understands it. Unless there is deep knowledge of those Doctrines of Hope and Responsibility, Reincarnation and Karma, is it not likely that in many a breast will be bitterness and resentment? Apart from the thoughts of dislike of rain and bogs and uninviting mountains in the minds of visitors, what of the thoughts and feelings of the inhabitants—perhaps even envy of those so much better off, who come for a brief period at the best of the year and leave the gloom and the darkness and the rain and the bogs to those unable to escape it all? If this be so, must not the astral light of the island be charged, and impress any sensitive organization in touch with it? It would seem to be so from the passages where Mr. Joad speaks of feeling himself "watched," though "half-a-dozen miles from the nearest house." Mr. Judge writes in *Letters That Have Helped Me*: "Vibration is the key to it all. The different states are only differences of vibration, and we do not recognize the astral or other planes because we are out of tune with their vibrations." When, however, "we now and then dimly feel that others are peering at us . . . It was an instant of synchronous vibration."

HOPE AND RESPONSIBILITY

"Doctrine of Hope heard at Cornell," reports the *New York Times,* June 18, 1934. "A possible interpretation of the universe," writes the editor, " 'bringing hope and expectation to the human soul,' was suggested to the graduating class of Cornell University . . . by the Rev. Dr. Rufus M. Jones, minister of the society of Friends and Professor of Philosophy in Haverford College." An *understanding* of the universal laws of Reincarnation and Karma as taught in Theosophy has ever brought true hope and a sense of *responsibility* rather than expectation to the human soul in all ages. These are facts in nature. The report continues:

> "The major thing anybody ever does for his life or his times is changing a terminus into a thoroughfare," Dr. Jones said, and one of the most stupendous problems of the day, he added, was whether matter was not a terminus, but a thoroughfare, not an ultimate, but a transmissive element for a deeper world of noumenal order. . . .

"The most remarkable form of matter makes up the cortex of the brain," said Dr. Jones, "and it is difficult to think of it as a productive agent secreting consciousness as the liver secretes bile.

"Rather it seems to be a transmissive medium to let consciousness break through into space-time as a prism lets light break through into color bands. It seems almost certain that there is an urge in the universe itself toward the spirit. It is possible that the visible world is a transmissive medium for a deeper universe whereof this world is but a bounding shore—in Shakespeare's words 'this bank and show of time.' " . . .

"We need to rethink the meaning and significance of life, to discover greater depths . . . " Dr Jones said. . . .

The depression had brought the realization that from now on frontiers must be within ourselves, and not somewhere in space, he added.

Tolerance and Faith

"Tolerance Urged by Dr. H. W. Dodds," reports the *Times*, in the same issue—almost in continuation of the Rev. Jones, as follows:

Tolerance and faith are the ideals by which we must abide if we are to be happy in this "strange and bewildering world," declared Dr. Harold Willis Dodds, president of Princeton. . . .

At best, progress toward a blissful state of general happiness is seen to be a long and slow process, marked by many relapses and lost ground which has to be regained. Melancholy voices are not lacking to tell us that degeneration rather than regeneration is to be the fate of mankind.

"In my opinion, such pessimism is as untrue as the shallow optimism it replaced. Against such a gloomy forecast I should place a faith in the social and spiritual nature of man working out a destiny in accordance with a divine will.

"That Indian Rope-Trick"

Materialistic disbelief and blindness is often its own protection from the dangers of psychism, as well as an inhibition to the discernment of truth with regard even to what is perceived with the five senses, not to speak of any beyond them. "The Indian Rope-Trick: Another Sea-Serpent?" asks *The Literary Digest* for June 23, 1934, under "Topics of the Day," and says:

Centuries old, but still going strong, the Indian rope-trick

pops back into the news. A British psychiatrist offers to perform it in the Royal Albert Hall, London, for $275,000. He says he needs that amount because it would be necessary to heat the hall to tropic temperature and to import Yogis and special sand from India. "Ridiculous," declares Joseph Dunninger, Amercian "mentalist." Indoors, he adds, it is comparatively simple. But doing it outdoors, under the open sky, and in broad daylight, as the Yogis are supposed to do, is another matter.

In this outdoor trick, it is hardly necessary to say, a rope is thrown into the air, remains upright without any apparent support, and is climbed by a boy, who disappears, reappearing at the magician's pleasure. One explanation is that it is done by mass hypnotism, but there is no lack of other explanations.

There is, however, an extraordinary lack of persons who actually have seen it. Nearly every one seems to have a friend whose father's cousin has watched Yogis do it times without number, but somehow no one has seen it himself. Miraculously, the prizes which have been posted for its performance, most recently by the British society known as the Magic Circle, never have been won. The suspicion consequently persists that the outdoor rope-trick is an ancient, harmless, and perpetually entertaining myth, on all fours with the sea-serpent.

So Be It

The fact is, however, that there are good first hand reports by those who have witnessed the performance, and these can be found not only in Theosophical literature, but in non-"theosophical" literature referred to therein. If the Yogis of India were to invade Western lands and perform their "tricks" and demonstrations for which their native soil and climate is more congenial, the resulting wave of superstition and credulity might be quite disastrous—in view of the sad effects of the "mass hypnotism" now produced by the thousand and one psychologists, psychiatrists, palmists, astrologers, psychics, mediums, etc., not to mention the mass hypnotism of sectarian "religion" and popular "science."